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# Funeral Sermon,

O C C A S I O N D

By the DEATH of *John Barksdale*  
Gentleman, late Inhabitant of  
*Middleton-Cheny*, in the County  
of *Northampton*.

And P R E A C H'D in the Parish-Church  
there, *September 26. 1699.*

B Y

*Thomas Hilton, A. M. Vicar of  
Brackley.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. Nutt near Stationers-Hill. M D C C.

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## Ecclef. XII. 5. The latter Part. X

—*Man goeth to his long home,  
and the Mourners go about the  
Streets.*

**T**HERE is no Man can plead ignorance to the Universal Decree of God concerning Man's Mortality, It is appainted unto all Men once to dye, and after this the Judgment, Heb. 9. 27. And every one of us may truly say, as that Wise Woman of Tekoa did, *We are all as Water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered again*, 2 Sam. 14. 14. There is no AGE, SEX, CONDITION, or QUALITY of Men whatsoever, but have been foyl'd by this Invincible CHAMPION DEATH; who, Rjding about the World upon his *Pale Horse* above these *Five thousand years*, has, with an Impartial Stroak levell'd all before him. Some, in their INFANCY have prov'd what it was to Dye, before they knew, or were sensible what it was to Live; some in the STRENGTH and Verdure of their Age, others in their Riper Years; High and Low, Rich and Poor, Noble and Ignoble, all must yield themselves Captives to this Mighty Conqueror. Death is that Great Leveller, that having *no respect of Persons*, mingles Shovels and Scepters together, and lays 'em Common in the Dust; making no Difference, or Distinction, be-

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twixt the Births and Qualities of Men , but causing GREATNESS as well as POVERTY to stoop and yield ; Equalizing those in their Death , that were never so far distant in Worth and Eminency whilst alive. Even those Persons themselves , that are styl'd Gods among us ( and that too not by any Fawning or Flattering Sycophant, but by God himself ) their Mortality proves 'em to be but Men to themselves , tho' they be as Gods to others : So that as *Epiſtetus* once told the Emperor , That to be BORN and to DYE was common both to PRINCE and BEGGAR , is a certain and undeniable Truth ; for there is no Man's Excellency or Quality can exempt him from Death , or secure him from the Grave. The various Sickneses and Miseries that continually attend this frail Constitution , have made the proudest of Sinners to confess with St. Peter to *Cornelius* , *I my self also am a mortal Man* , Acts 10. 26. There are no Ingredients in the Shop of Nature sufficiently Cordial to fortify the Heart against this King of Terrors Death , or his Harbingers ; the Velvet Slipper cannot fence the Foot from the Gout , nor the Diamond Ring the Finger from a Fellon , the richest Diadem cannot quit the Head-ach , nor the Purple Robe prevent a Fever ; Beauty, Strength, Riches, Friends , nor any , nor all , can reverse that Sentence , *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return*. Every Fit of an Ague , and every little Indisposition of this frail Constitution , is , as I may say , a kind of lighter Skirmish before the Main Battle of Death , wherein weak Man , being soon vanquish'd and subdu'd , is led a Captive Vassal to his Long Home. And when the Dark Lines of Mortality are drawn upon the Face of the Fairest Mortal now living , he presently becomes a Ghastly Spectre

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cle to look upon, ( howsoever Lovely and Beautiful he was before ) and the Conclusion at last is , *Bury my Dead out of my sight.*

*Man goeth to his Long Home , &c.*

Now for the better understanding of the Text , I shall endeavour , in the *First* place , to give you the Meaning and Explication of it . *Secondly* , Shew you its Parts and Division . *Thirdly* , Observe unto you that Point of Instruction , or Doctrine that is deducible from it . *Fourthly* and Lastly , I shall proceed to some Practical Inference and Improvement .

And *1.* For the Sense and Explication of the Words ; And here *First* I shall Endeavour to shew you who is the Man here spoken of in the Text , *Secondly* , What it is we are to understand by his *going or gate* ; *Thirdly* , Where his *long home* is ; *Fourthly* , Who are the *Mourners* .

And *First* , Who the *Man* is here spoken of in the Text ? *Man* we must understand is taken either *Collectively* , for the whole kind and Species of Men , as *Logicians* speak ; or *distributively* , for every individual Person in particular ; or *Indefinitely* , for *Man* in the ordinary course and acceptation ; now by *Man* here in my Text , is not understood the whole Kind or Species of Men ; for Philosophy reprieves universal Natures from dissolution ; and true it is indeed , that altho' single Persons every day dye , yet Mankind dyes not : Nor is *Man* taken for all particular Men of what rank and quality soever without exception ; for if all Men were to be attended with *Mourners* to their Funerals , then

*Mourners*

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Mourners themselves must have Mourners, and so either the train would be infinite, or the last Men would be destitute of Mourners.

But *Lastly*, By *Man* in the Text is understood *Man* in the ordinary Sense and acceptation of the word ; for you shall hardly find a Person, tho' never so poor and mean, but he has some friend or other to attend his Funeral, and to drop a Tear into his Grave.

But then *Secondly*, What is meant by *Man's going or gate* here in my Text ? *Going* we must know is not taken here for a progressive motion in special, as Walking, Runing, &c. but in general, for a passing or transition to another World, which way soever it be, whether we make our way, or it be made for us, whether we go to Death, or Death comes to us, nay whether we move or stand still, we are still going this common Road and way of all the World, and of all Flesh.

And then *Thirdly*, What is meant by *long home* here spoken of ? By *long home*, is understood the *Grave*, or the place where our Bodies must remain and continue until the time of the Restitution of all things. Now this *home*, may be truly call'd a *long home*, in comparison of our *short homes* from which we daily remove : These Houses we change at pleasure, that we cannot. Here our Flesh or our Bones, at least our Ashes and our Dust, shall remain in some place of the Earth or Seas till the Heavens be no more.

And then *Fourthly*, Who are meant by the *Mourners* here spoken of ? By *Mourners* here in the Text are meant all that attend the Dead to their Funerals, whether

whether they *Mourn* in *Truth*, or for *Fashion-sake*; And these *Mourners* are said to go *about the Streets*. It was a custom among the *Romans* for the Friends of the deceas'd, to hire certain Women call'd *Proseas*, to lament over their dead; for the most part among the *Jews* this sad Task was impos'd upon *Widdows*, or at least they voluntarily took it upon themselves, as the words of the Prophet imply, And there were no *Widdows* to make *Lamentation*, *Psal. 78. 64.* Now the Office of these *Widdows* was to walk about the *Streets* weeping and Lamenting for the Dead, to awaken the Living out of their dead sleep of security, and to ring in their Ears that Lesson of the Prophet, *All Flesh is Grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the Flower of the Field*, *Isa. 40. 6.* And so I come in the Second place to the Natural division of the Text; there are but Three things appertaining to Man during his abode in this World, *Life, Death, Burial*, and all these are either express'd, or imply'd in the Text.

*1st. Man goeth, there is his Life.* *2dly. To his Long home, there is his Death.* *3dly. And the Mourners go about the Streets;* there is his *Burial* by a periphrasis describ'd unto us.

The point of Instruction observable from the Words is this, *Viz.*

*That the Life of Man is a Voyage, or Pilgrimage;* Or thus, *That the Life of Man is but one continued motion and tendency towards the Grave and towards Eternity;* *Man goeth, &c.* And here I shall endeavour to confirm the Truth of this Point unto you. *First. By Scripture.* *Secondly. By Reason.*

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1st. By Scripture; and thus *Holy Jacob* terms the Life of Man ; he calls it the days of the years of his Pilgrimage, Gen. 47. 9. And the Psalmist tells us, I am a Stranger with them and a Sojourner as all my Fathers were, Psal. 39. 12. *Vita est via, et omnis Christianus est viator;* Man's Life is a Way, or Common Road that leads to his Grave, and every Man living in this World is a Passenger in it. The Life of Man is nothing else but one continued advance and uninterrupted motion from the Cradle to the Coffin, from the Womb to the Tomb ; this way is the way of all Flesh, a way in the which Children walk, before they are able to help themselves, and Old Men crawl when they are not able to go ; Infants that never had the use of their Limbs, and Impotent Old Age that has lost them, all of 'em run this race, wherein tho' some make a longer Line, others a shorter, yet at the last they all finish their course, and make their Beds in the Grave. A strange race indeed, wherein tho' a Man stand still, or sleep, yet he is still advancing forward, and gaining ground ; The Hour-Glass of our Lives is still running out, whether we work or play. The Ship is still tending towards its Port, tho' the Pilate Sleep in the Cabin : The like may be said here, whether we wake or sleep, move or rest, be busy, or be idle, mind it, or mind it not, we are still posting towards the Grave and towards Eternity.

That which St. Paul spake in a Divine Sense, Seneca makes good in a Natural, we dye daily ; for every day, nay every hour we lose some part of our Life, every step we take in Life, is a nearer advance and approach towards Death ; as our years encrease, so our Time decreaseth, for the more Years, Months, Days, Minutes that

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that we have liv'd, the less we have to live : Our lives are still upon the Flote till we come to our last period : We are but *Strangers* and *Pilgrims* here on Earth.

But then *2dly*. Not only *Scripture* but even *Reason* it self attests the Truth of this point : And indeed were we not first lost in our selves, were we not altogether *Strangers* to our own truest Interest, we should never seek for a place of Rest in that World, whose Fashion every day changeth, and which must at the last with it's work be burnt with Fire. For do we not see by this common light of Reason implanted in us, that the Mind of Man is a thing of Infinite Capacity, restless, and even utterly insatiable with any thing here below ? Content is that which all Men have desir'd and aspir'd after, but never yet any Person fully arriv'd to ; but still as one desire is satisfied, another riseth in the Soul ; and when we have all that we at first desir'd, we are still wanting : One World was not large enough for *Alexander*, nay, had there been as may Worlds as those Atomes of which the Phylosopher suppos'd it to be made, he would have wish'd for more : Our Appetite comes by Eating, our Measures are enlarg'd by being fill'd, and our desires are the more keen and earnest by enjoying : *Majora cupere ex his discimus*, the obtaining of some good thing desir'd, does but prompt and provoke us to desire more. But now to draw this point to our present purpose ; If then the things of this World be not able to satisfy the desires of the rational Soul, if Man never yet found any full content and Satisfaction in any the choicest Pleasures and Enjoyments of this Life, if nothing here upon Earth can allay this infinite hunger of the reasonable Soul, { which certainly was not imprinted in us for nought. }

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If

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If we cannot find this true comfort here in this World, tho' we should double Methusalem's Age, nay, tho' we should live to the last end and Period of it ; If so, as so it is most certain, we cannot then think, that this Earth is our Country, but that the things which we so highly admire and esteem here, are altogether Strangers to us, and we to them ; and we must be forst to turn our selves about, and look towards someting else which may satisfy and answer our desires. The Choicest Pleasures and Delights of the Sons of Men, are but *Laborious Trifles, deceitful Vanitys, beautiful nothings,* at best but the *Phantoms* and *Apparitions* of good things ; It is a God alone in Christ that can satisfy this *Evanilia*, this *Infinite Appetite* and desire of the *Rational Creature* ; Hence then we conclude that this *Earth* is but our *Theatre* to walk thro', Heaven is our proper *Place* and *Country*, and thither we are bound.

But then *2dly.* As we our selves are Strangers here in this World, so our abode here is like that of Strangers in a Forreign Land : When *Adam* was Lord of all the World, he was but a Stranger in it ; for God made him naked in Paradise, and withal gave him no Sense of his Nakedness, and the Reason is given by a *Learned Author*, that Man might not be distracted and call'd ~~and his wits the God~~ from Meditation upon God ; that the care of his Flesh might not steal away his Mind and Thoughts from him that made him : So that *Adam* himself was but a *Stranger*, when he was made the Sole *Monarch* and *Emperor* of the World ; but so soon as he was fallen, God cloath'd him with Skins, *ut illum veluti morte quadam indueret*, as it were with Death it self, which was so lively represented unto him  
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in the Skins of those Dead Beasts, that he might always carry about him the Memento's and Remembrances of his Mortality : A Stranger , ( you know ) comes not to stay long in a place ; he is ( as we say ) here to day, and gone to morrow ; so is Man, he flieth as a Post or rather as a *Shadow, and continueth not,* Job 14. 2. His Life expires, and is at an end, even as soon as a Tale that is told, and not so long remembred : There be many Errors in his way, but none in his end ; which way forever he travelleth, wheresoever he pitcheth his Tent, his Journey's end's the Grave; *Hoc stipulata est dei vox hoc Sponsa dicit omne quod Nascitur*, this is the Stipulation or contract, that God has made with every Living Soul ; By being Born we made a Promise and oblig'd our selves to dye ; We are bound in a sure obligation, and receiv'd our Souls upon condition to resign 'em agen, when God shall remand it. Now would we know when we begin to pay this dept to Nature ? I Answer, We begin to pay it with our first Breath, and are still paying it till we have breath'd our last : Whilst I am now speaking, and you hearing, we are paying part of the Sum, and whether this be our last Payment or not, God knows : I was dying whil'st I was Writing this Sermon, every stroak of my Pen speit a part of my Life, and I am dying also now whil'st I am delivering of it ; Every Breath I draw to preserve Life, is a degree Substracted from my Life : I am in a manner Entomb'd already, and every place I Breath in is as it were my Grave ; for in every place I am, I moulder and consume away ; in every place I live, I draw nearer and nearer to Putrefaction : We may all of us truly say as those *Marriners,* who were to fight and dye, did to the *Emperor Claudius,* *Morituri te Salutant, O Emperor dying Men Salute thee !*

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The like we may say here, we Salute one another not so much as *living*, as *dying Men*: Whil'st I say good Morrow to my Neighbour, I am nearer to my end, and he to whom I wish't it is nearer his also: In what relation foever we stand, whether as Minister or People, Masters or Servants, Fathers or Children, we are all but *dying Men*, Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth: The whole World is but one entire *Colony of Strangers*, every Age is new planted with *dying Men*; and this is that which put St. *Austin* to a stand, whether it were best to call our *Life a Living Death, or a Dying Life*.

*Objection.* But possibly some or other may Object, and say, this is a very *Trite and Common Theme and Subject* you insist upon; and indeed so it is, for what is more *Common than Death?* And yet as common as it is, I know no Lesson so fatally forgotten as this is; for tho' *day unto day uttereth Knowledge*, tho' the *Preacher* opens his *Mouth*, and the *Grave her's*, and we daily see one Pilgrim or other dropping into the Pit, yet we will not be perswaded to believe that our own turn will come: But believe it or believe it not, nothing is more certain or undeniable: Let a Man ransack all the Books in Nature, let him turn over all the Volumns of History and Antiquity, let him become Companion with the Sun, and Travel over the whole Circle and Circumference of the Earth, let him visit all the Pyramids and Tombs, the Sepulchres, and Shrines of Mortals and he shall still meet with Trophys of Death's Conquest, a Stone Engraven at least with an, *Hic jacet*, Here lies such, or such a one; Here he dies, be he a *Nebuchadnezzar*, a *Nimrod*, or *Belshazzar*; Here lies the great *Romey*, and there the greater *Alexander*; Here lies the *Wife*

Wise *Cato*, and there the Learned *Aristotle*, or whatsover other *Grandies* of the World *Tradition or Chronology* boast of ; Here lye their Bodies Interr'd, link't up in Fetter's of Corruption, Chamber'd up in Dust, Prisoners to the Grave, and Captives to Death : Behold the Worthys whose Memorial is recorded in Holy Writ, What was the Period and Conclusion of 'em all ? Did they not all see Corruption ? Did they not all after they had serv'd their Generations resign up their Earthly Tabernacles, and take up their Lodgings in the Dust ? They had all but an appointed time here on Earth ; they all knew they had here no continuing City, but that their Habitation was to depart, and to be remov'd like a Shepherds Tent ; What Man is he that Liveth and shall not see Death, says the *Psalmist* ? Even the *Wise* and *Prudent* dye, as well as the *Ignorant* and *Foolish* : However Men differ as to outward Circumstances in the World, yet at the last they all Sleep in the Dust and the Worms cover 'em. Some Men's Journeys are Longer, some Shorter than others ; some make a greater Figure in the World, some a less ; but in the end the Grave is as it were the common Inn and Receptacle where they all Lodge, where they must say to Rotteness, thou art my Father, and to the Worm, thou art my Sister, and my Mother.

I come now to the *Practical Inference and Improvement* of the Point.

Is it so then that Man's Life is a Voyage or Pilgrimage, a continued motion and tendency towards the Grave and towards Eternity ? O then ! Let it be your continual care and study to be preparing and providing for your Long Home ; and for the better enforcing of the Duty, be pleas'd to consider,

Firſt.

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*First.* That when you come to Dye, all these Creature-helps and Comforts, that you now so much admire, and dote upon, will then fail and forsake you, and that for ever. It is strange to see, how Men toil themselves out, beat their Brains, tire their Spirits, break their Sleep, perplex their Minds, rack their Consciences, ingulph and drown themselves in Cares and Troubles, hazard their invaluable Souls, projecting to Immortalize their Names and Families; and when they have done all, like the poor silly Silk-worm, Dye in the Work. My Brethren, let us not be any longer deluded with the Gilden Pills, or Decoying Blandishments of this World: Let us not, like the baser Creatures, fix our Eyes and our Thoughts downwards, but let us seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; Let us not be like the Moles, that are still digging and delving in the Earth, rooting for that, which, when they have found, they must soon leave behind 'em: but let us set our Faces and our Hearts Heavenward; Heaven is our Country, let Heaven be our chiefest aim; Our Rest is in Heaven, our Joys are in Heaven, our Saviour is in Heaven, let our Desires, our Affections, our Souls be there also; Let us be still thinking of our Precious Souls, and Dying Bodies, and provide in time for Sicknes and for Death, for dye we must, and what will it profit a man to have gain'd the whole World and lose his own Soul?

*Secondly.* Seeing to Dye is the general condition of all Men, consider with your selves Christians, whether you are going to Heaven or Hell: My Brethren,

thren, I do heartily wish that all that hear me this day, would seriously consider, and effectually apply this Serious Consideration to their own Souls, and remember, that at the end of this short and momentary Life we live here, there are endless Joys, or endless Sorrows: that there is one place for the Just, and another for the Unjust in the other World; one place for Believers, another for Unbelievers; one place for the Saints, another for Impenitent Sinners; one place for the Sheep, another for the Goats; a Dismal Night, or a Glorious Day; Endless Pleasures, or Endless Torments awaiting us in a Future State: Now, my Brethren, let us stop here a little, and put this Serious Question to our own Souls, To whether of these two Periods, or Places, we are now Possing? Sure I am, 'tis the Point of the Greatest and Everlasting Concernment; all the Comforts of this World, and of the World to come, depend upon the Serious Resolving of it to our Own Spirits: A Tenant that knows he must resign up his Habitation in a short time, is very Improvident and Imprudent too, if he takes no care for another Settlement: The like it will be with us that Inhabit these Houses of Clay, we are sure we must one day leave 'em, how soon we know not, perhaps to Morrow, peradventure This Day, it may be Suddenly; How Inexcusably Foolish and Inconsiderate shall we be then, if we take no Care, if we lay in no Provision for our Souls, and for Futurity?

My Brethren, let us bethink our selves in time; and let it be the Care and Busines of our Lives, to Search and Try our Ways, and to Prove our own Hearts;

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Hearts ; for whatsoever we sow, that we shall undoubtedly reap, and as the Tree Falls, so it must lie, and that for ever, Eccles. 11. 3. If it falls towards the North, it lies towards the North; if it falls towards the South, it lies towards the South: If you live and die Heavenward, Heaven shall be the place of your Eternal Residence and Abode, but if you live and dye towards Hell, Hell shall be your Dismal Lot and Portion: And is it not sad and dreadful to believe, that you have Precious and Immortal Souls, and do not know, nor consider, whether they shall be Saved or Damn'd, stand or fall, live or dye to all Eternity ; yet this is the deplorable condition of Millions of Men and Women in the World, that are posting down the ready Road to Hell and Perdition, and yet they perswade and flatter themselves that they are in the way to Bliss and Happiness : My Brethren, let us in time consider the Miseries of a fatal and a final disappointment, and with all imaginable care and expedition betake our selves to some saving course for our Souls and for our Eternal Estate ; that Heaven, that Place of glorious Recompences and Rewards, and not Hell, that dismal Region of Terrors and disconsolateness, may be our Lot and Portion.

*Thirdly.* Consider Christians, when Death comes to strike the Fatal Blow, your Conditions shall be stated, your Places of abode shall be determin'd without Mutation, and that for ever : Then your Immortal and Immaterial Souls shall be for Everlasting Joys, or for Endless Sorrows ; for a never Dying Life, or for an Ever-living Death : For Eternal Glory or for Eternal Ignominy : Now remember this ye that forget God and your Souls

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Souls too, Remember I say, and call to mind in time, that if you be found without Faith, without Repentance, without Holiness, but one moment after Death, you are undone for ever: For, *ab infernis nulla redemptio*, after Death, all ways, and means, and helps, and hopes, shall fail, and that for ever. There is no Work, nor Wisdom, nor Knowledge, nor Repentance in the Grave whether we are going, Eccles. 9. 10. After Death, Sinner, Justice will be Inexorable, God Irreconcilable, thy Sin Unpardonable, Heaven unattainable, and thy poor neglected Soul past all help and hope and that for ever: There will be no Repenting in the Grave, nor working out our Salvation in those Regions of Horrour and Confusions that are below: There are no Prayers nor Sermons, nor Ministers, nor Sacraments, to be found there: This Life is the only Season and Seeds-Time of Mercy; this Time and instant of abode we live here, are the days of our Preparation and Purification for our Immortal Souls. This World is the great Laboratory for the fitting and perfecting of Souls for the next: No saving work for our Souls to be done hereafter; Death shuts the Door and everlasting seals us up in that condition it finds us: And Remember Sinners, delays breed danger, take heed, my Brethren, it is a fearful thing to neglect the overtures of Divine Grace and Mercy, when so lovingly tender'd us: Remember Profane Esau, who for one Morsel of Meat sold his Birth-right, but afterwards when he would have Inherited the Blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for Repentance, tho' he sought it carefully and with Tears, Heb. 12. 17.

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My Brethren, delay is the Rock, the Shipwreck, are destruction of many Souls : No doubt but there <sup>are</sup> Myriads of Souls now in Hell, who had general purpose in their Life-time to have Repented hereafter, to have Embrac'd Christ, and honour'd him as their Saviour ; but God in Justice has cut 'em short, and depriv'd 'em of that Mercy now, which when they might, they would not accept of.

I know the Wicked and Profane World will be apt to Object against such discourses as these, and say " Why are you so Earnest, Sir, upon such ungrateful Points as these are ? What necessity of so speedy and immediate a Repentance as you seem to insinuate ? " God is a Patient and Long-suffering God, a God of Pardons and Forgiveness, we can never out-sin the Mercys of God, At what time soever a Sinner repents, &c. The sower work of Repentance will bring Trouble enough along with it when it comes ; Why should we court and invite our Sorrows too soon ? What Reason have we to deny our selves the Pleasures of living whil'st we are capable of Enjoyment ? Time enough to entertain such Melancholly Thoughts as these hereafter ; Youth must have it's risk, the Covetous Bag must be fill'd, the Pleasures of the Flesh must be fully tasted, Old Age is coming on, and then it will be time enough to grow wise and Repent, Sickneses and Infirmities are approaching, and then it will be time enough for us to retire and look Heavenward. But, O foolish Sinner, Who hath infatuated thy Soul that thou should'st hearken to such unreasonable Suggestions as these are, *nam morsa damnoſa*, delays are

are dangerous ; *Qui non est bodie cras minus aptus erit.* He that is unfit to day, makes himself the more unfit to morrow by procrastinating the Work. Besides there is a time coming, and we know not how near it is, in the which many shall seek to enter into the Kingdom of God, and shall not be able : Time may come, I say, when the *despisers* of *Gospel-Love* and *Mercy* may early and earnestly seek after *Christ* and *Grace*, and shall not be able to find ; and all because they formerly hated *Knowledge*, and did not choose the *Fear of the Lord* : Say not then, Sinner, *anon*, to morrow, or hereafter I will *repent* and *amend*, for thy to morrow thy hereafter may never come, and then Woe and a thousand Woes to thy miserable Soul : Why not to day, why not this present Instant ? For now, Behold ! Now is the accepted time, now is the day of Salvation.

But then *Fourthly*. The Fourth and Last consideration to move us to Prepare against the Evil Day (seeing it is the general condition of all Men) is this, that it is the most dreadful astonishing Spectacle on this Side Hell, to see a graceless Wretch, or Profane Worldling breathing out his last ; There are many hideous Spectacles to be seen in the World, as namely, to see a Man Starving and Pining to Death for want of Food, or labouring under violent Pains and Tortures for want of a Physician, or to see a Person upoh the Wheel or Wrack, his Body exquisitely Tortur'd, his Bones broken and shatter'd to pieces, &c. But Oh ! How sad, unutterable and amazing a Sight is it to behold a Wicked non-repentant Sinner in his cold Sweats, and dying groans, with his Precious and invaluable Soul hovering upon his Pale and Trembling Lips ready to take it's

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flight into the other World ? When all the accumulated Riches of the whole Earth shall not be able to Purchase one Minutes truce or respite for him, and he shall be only able to wish for Life, but cannot Live ; and fear to dye, but must for ever : Consider Sinner, what will thy miserable Soul do, when thou shalt be reduc'd to such a desperate extremity as this ? When suddenly thy Senses shall fail thee, thy Body languish, thy Spirits flag, thy Pulse beat lower and lower, and thy neglected Soul shall take her farewell of the Body, and of all her Comfort : When thou shalt feel the Sting of thy Sins Tormenting thy Conscience, the previous Flames of Hell-fire flashing and darting in thy Face, thy Heart-strings ready to burst asunder, and the Ghastly Apprehensions of a speedy and remediless horror seizing thy Soul : When thou shalt see Satan standing at thy Right hand to accuse thee, Death at thy Elbow to prey upon thee, and the Infernal Lake wide open beneath ready to swallow and ingulf thy Soul : What Person under such miserable and dreadful Circumstances as these would not prefer one dram of Grace before a world of Riches ?

Methinks I hear such a miserable Soul as this complaining with Job, and even Cursing the Day and Offices of his Birth ; *Let the Day perish wherein I was Born, and the Night in the which it was said there is a Man-Child Conceived ; Let that Day be Darkness, let not God regard it from above, neither let the Light shine upon it ; As for that Night let Darkness seize upon it, let it not be joyn'd unto the days of the Year, let it not come into the number of the Months ; Because it shut not up the doors of my Mothers Womb, nor bid Sorrow from mine eyes,* Job 3. 3, 4, 6, &c.

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6, &c. Why was I not entomb'd in that secret Cave and Cell where I first had Being ? Wherefore was I brought forth out of the Private Recesses of the Womb to see the Light of this Sun ? Happy were I now, as ever I was *born*, if I could be *unborn* again : Oh that I might now ( if it were possible ) be turn'd into a Beast or Stone, or Toad, or Serpent, or any thing, or nothing ! Oh that my *Immortal Soul*, were now *Mortal* ! That I might dye in Hell, and not live Eternally in those Flames that I shall never be able to avoid or sustain ! This, this will be the wretched condition of a Person Living and Dying in a Christ-less and hopeless state : Oh the Miserys ! the Soul-rending, distracting Miserys of such a case ! No Heart can conceive, no Tongue can express the Sorrows of such a Soul.

Lastly therefore, Let us all of us, in the Name and Fear of God, be perswaded speedily to Redeem those precious Particles of Time which God and Providence lends us for *The One Thing necessary* ; I mean, of Providing for our Souls, and for Eternity. The Busines we have to do in this World, the Busines of Religion, in order to the cleansing of our Souls, and preparing 'em for Glory, is a Great and Important Busines ; and the time we have to live here has Two most dangerous qualities in Reference to it,

*First.* It is short ; Our longest Period is not above Eighty years, and few there be that arrive to that Age.

*Secondly.*

Secondly. It is very Casual and Uncertain ; There be infinite Diseases , Accidents , and Distempers that cut us off suddenly , such as scarce give us any warning at all , before they hurry us into the other World ; And considering how many little Strings and Fibres there are , as it were , to hold us up in Life ; and how small and inconsiderable they are , and how easily broken , and the breach and disorder of any of the least of 'em , may prove an Inlet to Death ; it is a kind of Miracle that we live at all : I say , considering upon how small dependancies our Life hangs , and how weak and brittle they are , it is almost a Miracle that we live a Month , or a Moment .

Besides , if thou once lettest slip these Gracious Seasons and Opportunities for thy Soul , thou shalt never be able to recall 'em again : Time once lost , it's lost for ever . All the Wealth of both the Indies can never secall or retrieve the last minute that is fled by us : And Remember , Christian , if thou sufferest the time of thy Gracious Visitation to lapse by thee , thou shalt rue it eternally in those Flames that are as easelss , as they are remediless ; And this is that , that will increase thy Hell hereafter to remember , That once ( hadst thou not been a Cruel Traytor to thine own Soul ) once , thou mightest have had Heaven for seeking Christ , and Salvation for looking after : This Consideration will , one Day , be even like a Fiery Scorpion , to Lash and Torment thy Soul for ever and ever : Certainly this , this is the Elixir and Quintessence of Torment , even the very Hell of Hells to the Damned , to consider , that they had once

once a time wherein they might , upon easie and equitable Termes , have procur'd Everlasting Rest and Glory to themselves , but they foolishly mispent that Time and Season, which is now never to be recall'd or redeem'd again. Oh ! What would not lost Souls now give but for one moment of that precious Time which we most shamefully and sinfully trifled and wan-ton away in Drinking , Sporting and Excessive Wick-edness ? How would these Damned Spirits, if they might enjoy but one of those Thousand Halcyon days of the Gospel, which we neglect, even with the utmost of their Diligence improve it to their Souls Advantage ? But alas ! their Time is past, their Sun is set ; their day of Grace is ended, and they must for ever undergoe those Torments , which they shall never be able to escape or endure : This, this is the present wretched and de-plorable condition of the Damned, and this will certainly be the condition of every one of us, if we , as they, neglect the Time of our Gracious Visitation, and Im-prove not all those Spiritual Advantages and Opportuni-ties that God and Providence lends us for the good of our Souls.

My Brethren , let us remember our selves , it is but high time that we should reflect upon our Conditions ; let the time past of our Lives suffice us , that we have wrought the will of the Gentiles ; *Ad majora nascimur.* Sure I am, if we consider it aright, we are Born for Greater Things than to be still Groveling upon Earth, and Ingulping our selves in the Cares and Concerns of this Life : Let us Remember , Christians , that our Lives are short , and that we are every Moment pos-ing towards an Unchangeable Condition, Death, the Grave and Eternity are at our heels ; and, as Death leaves

leaves us, so Judgment will find us ; and if we lie down in our Sins, we shall be sure to rise up with 'em again ; and they shall be as so many Cursed Fiends or Furies to wrack and torment the Soul for ever and ever : And let us consider, that nothing but Faith, and a good Conscience, and an assur'd Interest in Christ's Blood, will be Armour of Proof against the *Evil Day*; *Keep Innocency, and take to the thing that is right, for that will bring a Man Peace at the last*, says the *Psalmist*, *Psal. 37. 38.* As a Pious Man once said, when he lay upon his Sick Bed, and his Friends brought a Julip to him, No Julip, says he, like the Blood of Christ ; The like I may say here, No Cordial so sweet, as that Compos'd of the Blood and Merits of a dying Saviour, both to a Living and to a Dying Man. A well-grounded Faith in *Christ Jesus*, and the Conscience of an Universal and Upright Sincerity in all our actions, will be more sweet and refreshing to our Spirits, when we come to Dye, than all the healing Gums or Restoratives of the Physicians : O how blessed a thing will it be for the Pious Soul to sit down in the Evening of Old Age, and feed upon the Comforts of a well-spent Youth and Manhood ? When he shall be able to say, with good *Hezekiah*, *Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart*, *Isaia. 38. 3.* And with that Pattern of True Penitence, *Penitentiam agi, quando peccare potui*: Lord, thou knowest, I then Repented me of my Sins, when I had time, when I had opportunity, when I had abilities of committing them. Such a comfortable Reflection as this, at the last, will be a Sovereign Cordial to us in our Dying Moments, and at our greatest need.

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In a Word, this is that that will support us in Life, comfort us in Sickness, Revive us in Death ; nay, this is that that will accompany us beyond Death and the Grave, and prove our best friend, next under God, and his Christ, and our most Blessed Redeemer, in both Worlds, even to all Eternity.

### Occasion.

Having now done with the Text, I come in the next place to the *Occasion*, which is to Celebrate the Funerals of our Deceased Friend and Relation, and to Accompany him to the Grave his Long Home, the last Duty and Service we owe to Souls Departed. It is not my Custom to write *Encomiums* upon the Dead, and to fill up my Funeral Discourses with a needless Farce of Panegyrick Flattery; as well knowing, that those Persons are not *Prais'd*, whose Praise is of *Men*, but they whose Praise is of *God*: This therefore only in the general I shall say of our Deceased Brother: That which is good or Praise-worthy in him, that I do in special recommend to your Pious care and Intitation, what was otherwise let it be buried in the Grave and in Silence with him: I might here take occasion to Blazon the Scutcheon of our Deceased Friend, and shew you how he was Descended of Reverend and Renowned Ancestors, but neither do I think this so proper and becoming this Sacred Place and Solemity; for it is not Blood, but Grace, that makes a Man truly honourable in this World,

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and

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and in the next. *Noble Birth without new birth in Christ* is of no avail with God : Let a Man shew never so honourable a Pedegree, let a Man produce never so glorious a Line of Progenitors, yet if he be not an humble and Repentant Sinner, he is but a poor and even despicable Creature in God's sight : I shall therefore crave leave to evade all such unnecessary and fruitless Harangues of Vulgar Flattery and Applause ; and shall confine my self only to what I have observ'd remarkable in his late Visitation : It is well known to those that were conversant with him in his Illness, that he was a poor Tetter'd Lazar, full of Sores and Botches, almost from the Crown of the Head to the Sole of the Foot ; Our Christian Charity obliges us to hope, that God in Mercy to him was pleas'd to appoint him his Sorrows in this Life, and to suffer his Body to be punish'd in this World, that his Soul might be saved in the day of the Lord. Behold now ! after all the Pains and Fagittues of a burthen-some Pilgrimage, his wearied Limbs are repairing apace to rest and repose themselves in the silent Dormitory of the Grave. Here the *Wicked cease from troubling, and here the weary are at rest.* He has now taken his farewell of the World and of all his Neighbours, but he is gone but a little, a very little while before us : We must all of us follow, and that shortly too, in our appointed Periods ; a few more changes of the Night and Day, and fewer of the Summer and Winter will bring us all ( as it has done him ) where we shall change no more : Happy, thrice Happy, and for ever Happy is that Soul that is prepar'd for that Hour and Minute when Christ comes.

He animates his reader by a strong appeal to his interest, and concludes with a hearty Amen.

Here

Here, as we shall Sigh no more, as we shall Sorrow no more, as we shall Suffer no more, so we shall Sin no more, we shall offend God no more, we shall Dye no more: Here we shall be for ever Free'd, not only from the worst of Fears, but the greatest of Dangers also, the Buffetings of Satan, the Temptations of a wicked World, the Treacherys of a Deceitful Heart: In short, here, as Sin shall be no longer a Burthen to us, so *Satan* shall be no longer a Tempter, but we shall Enjoy our God and our Saviour in a most pure and undefiled manner, even in the secure fruition of those sinless and serene Joys that are above, which shall never be interrupted, and shall never have end: In a word, here we shall ever be with the Lord, to behold, and to Feast our eyes with the ravishing and astonishing beauties of the Lord: And our Work and our Happiness to all Eternity shall be to Echo forth perpetual Anthems of Praises and Hallelujah's unto God that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for evermore.

For which Blessed Work, and Glorious Place, God of his infinite Mercy fit and prepare us all, for the Merits and Mediation of *Jesus Christ*, to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all Honour and Glory, World without end, *Amen, Amen.*

F I N I S.